GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4356
ANSWERED ON:28.03.2017
Price Rise of Essential Commodities
Lokhande Shri Sadashiv Kisan;Muddahanumegowda Shri S.P.;Patel Shri Subhash;Shiyal Dr. Bharati Dhirubhai;Swami Maharaj Dr. Sakshi

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been continuous rise in prices of essential items including wheat, onion and oil etc. and if so, the steps taken by the Government on urgent basis to effectively control the price-rise in the interest of common man;
(b) whether the Government is considering to make available wheat, onion and oil etc. in retail stores, throughout the country to contain price rise and if not, the reasons therefor;
(c) whether any step has been taken to strengthen the Public Distribution System to control the inflation in food prices and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
(d) whether almost 40% rise in the prices of vegetables particularly of onion and potato has been registered from May, 2016 and if so, the details thereof, vegetable-wise; and
(e) the reasons for the rapid rise in prices of vegetables particularly of onion and potato along with the details of the steps taken by the Government to control the price rise of vegetables?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

(a) : Prices of groundnut oil, vanaspati, soya oil, sunflower oil and palm oil increased while prices of wheat, mustard oil and onions decreased over the last one year. The details prices of of some of the essential commodities are given at Annexure.

Government has taken various measures from time to time to stabilize prices of essential food items which inter-alia, include creation of buffer stock of pulses for effective market intervention; appropriately utilizing trade and fiscal policy instruments like import and export duty, Minimum Export Price, export restrictions etc.to regulate domestic availability and moderate prices; imposition of stock limits, provision of higher Minimum Support Prices to incentivize farmers for increasing production etc.

(b) : No such proposal is under consideration of the Government.

(c) : The Government enacted the National Food Security Act in 2013, which provides for coverage of two-thirds of the population of the country for receiving highly subsidised foodgrains @ Rs. 1/2/3 per kg for coarse grains/wheat/rice.

The Act is being implemented in all the States/UTs and covers about 80 crore persons to receive highly subsidised foodgrains as per the provisions of the Act.

(d) & (e) : The prices of onions and potatoes as on 23rd March, 2017 was lower than prices prevailing on the corresponding day of May, 2016. The details are given in the table below:

Vegetables Daily Average Retail Price (?/kg)
On 23/03/2017 on 23/05/2016 % Variation
Potato 13.47 19.56 -31.13
Onion 14.66 15.63 -6.21
Tomato 16.98 30.15 -43.68
Source: State Civil Supplies Department
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